

Creating Content That Will “Click”

By Ary Rosenbaum, Esq.

In the old days, newspaper and television advertising were the way that you could get your message across to potential clients and sources for referrals. The only problem is that advertising was and is still cost prohibitive. Even something like search engine optimization to get better search results for your business on Google can cost a few shekels and based on the nature of your business, it may not be a good fit. My business has been built on social media marketing, which is the use of social media platforms to promote the services I offer as an ERISA attorney and the marketing is based on the content I produce (such as the article you’re reading right now). So this article is about how you can provide content on social media that could increase your business.

A little boring history lesson

Thanks to articles like this on JDSupra.com, I’ve been able to reach a national audience that has helped grow my law practice. About 9 years ago, I started at a Long island law firm with the hopes of building a national ERISA law practice. I had worked on 700+ plans at the third party administration (TPA) firm I had worked at and the late Richard Laurita taught me everything I needed to know about developing relationships and selling. At first, I thought I could leverage existing law firm clients to grow my business especially when the partners who had these clients would receive 50% of the ERISA fees I’d bill. For some

reason or another, these law firm partners were allergic to making money and growing the firm. So I needed to develop sources of referrals from outside plan providers. Since I had limited plan sponsor clients, it was hard to develop relationships with other plan providers who might just see me as someone who was good at receiv-

ness, they will remember you. Now that I had this idea, all I needed was to come up with great content and that’s not so easy.

Content has to connect

Whether I was working in student politics, the school newspaper, as a solo ERISA or a synagogue Vice President, I realized that in order to be successful, I needed to make a connection. Everything in business is making connections and content that you produced has to connect with your audience. Of course, you need to identify your audience.

Finding your audience

It’s not enough that you have to develop content that can connect; you also have to determine who your audience is. Why? It helps with targeting whom you should be contacting. I learned that lesson the hard way when I would network with small Long Island businesses/entrepreneurs who either didn’t have money for retirement or only had money for a small business IRA type plan where the plan document was free. If you’re in the



ing referrals but not being able to pay that back in any meaningful way. So I decided to write articles that plan providers could hand out to potential plan sponsor clients as part of their sales materials because it could offer a neutral viewpoint that confirmed what the plan provider was saying. Since the articles were free to distribute, I thought it would build a tremendous amount of goodwill because if you could help a plan provider land a piece of busi-

retirement plan business, your audience are other type of plan providers, plan sponsors, and their decision makers/influencers. Identifying your audience will also give ideas as to where you can actually find your audience. When I first started out in my own practice, it was really slow. I accepted an invitation to meet Mike Alfred from Brightscope and his words of encouragement was a suggestion that I used the LinkedIn groups to start conversations. He

was absolutely right, beginning conversations, commenting, and posting article on the LinkedIn groups helped me develop relationships that increased my footprint in the industry.

Connecting at their level

I was never a good legal writer when it came to law review articles. My background was student journalism and it just wasn't a good fit at law firms that only care about legal writers. While I wasn't very good with law review and the other journals, I realized I had a talent to connect with an audience through my writing. The way I could connect is my writing to a level that they could understand. I wasn't writing to other lawyers who had the same ERISA background as I did. Since my audiences are plan providers and plan sponsors that aren't likely to have the same retirement plan knowledge that I do, I have to write on a level that they understand. I have to take some very difficult legal concepts and break it into something that plan providers and sponsors can digest. A spoonful of sugar will make the medicine go down and content on retirement plan that can easily be digested can have the same effect.

their attention. Your content needs to be a call to action, it's informing plan sponsors and plan providers that what you're saying can't be ignored. One great hook is advising plan sponsors and plan provid-

business card you can have because it's a cost effective manner of letting plan sponsors and other plan providers know what you an expert you are and that you're just a phone call or email away if they need you.



Content has to look good

It's not enough that you produce content, you also need to make sure that your content is in format that is aesthetically pleasing and easy to read. Content needs to be in a format where people will actually read and articles written and laid out in a format that will make it difficult or unappealing for your readers to read. That means articles that are just drafted in Microsoft Word instead of InDesign isn't going to have the eye appeal and the eyeballs needed to make you content "clickable".

Content isn't just one and done

The thing about content is that you always have to be producing it. One article or a blog post isn't going to launch you as the next big thing in retirement plans. You're going to have to find time to write and produce content on a consistent basis It's a lot of work, but consistent content is only going to further your reputation as a retirement plan provider.

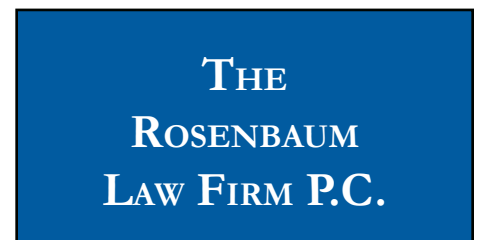
Content has to have a purpose

Writing content is important, but not all content is shareable and of interest to your audience. If you want content that "clicks" with the audience, it has to have a purpose. It has to be a call to action or information that plan sponsors could use. For example, I see many plan providers write about some guidance issued by the Internal Revenue Service or the Department of Labor. Quite honestly, there are many great websites that produce retirement plan news, so regurgitating what the government says isn't content that connects and is shareable. Plan providers and plan sponsors aren't interested in what the government says unless they're told what it means for them. Plan providers and plan sponsors have enough on their plate and if they're going to read your content, there has to be a hook to grab

ers on good practices in helping retirement plans out. Whatever the hook is, your content needs to be a calling card to hire you.

Content can't be commercial

While I recommend that content have a calling card aspect to it, the worse you can do is commercialize the content. Plan providers and plan sponsors will share your content as long as it's commercial free. They will tune out any content that is just a blatant ad for your services. Good content sells your services without promoting your services in a commercial manner. I don't need to overtly sell my services as an ERISA attorney because the call to action aspect of my content is all the selling I need to do. The whole idea of providing content is that it is a mechanism to develop and enhance your reputation, it's the best



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